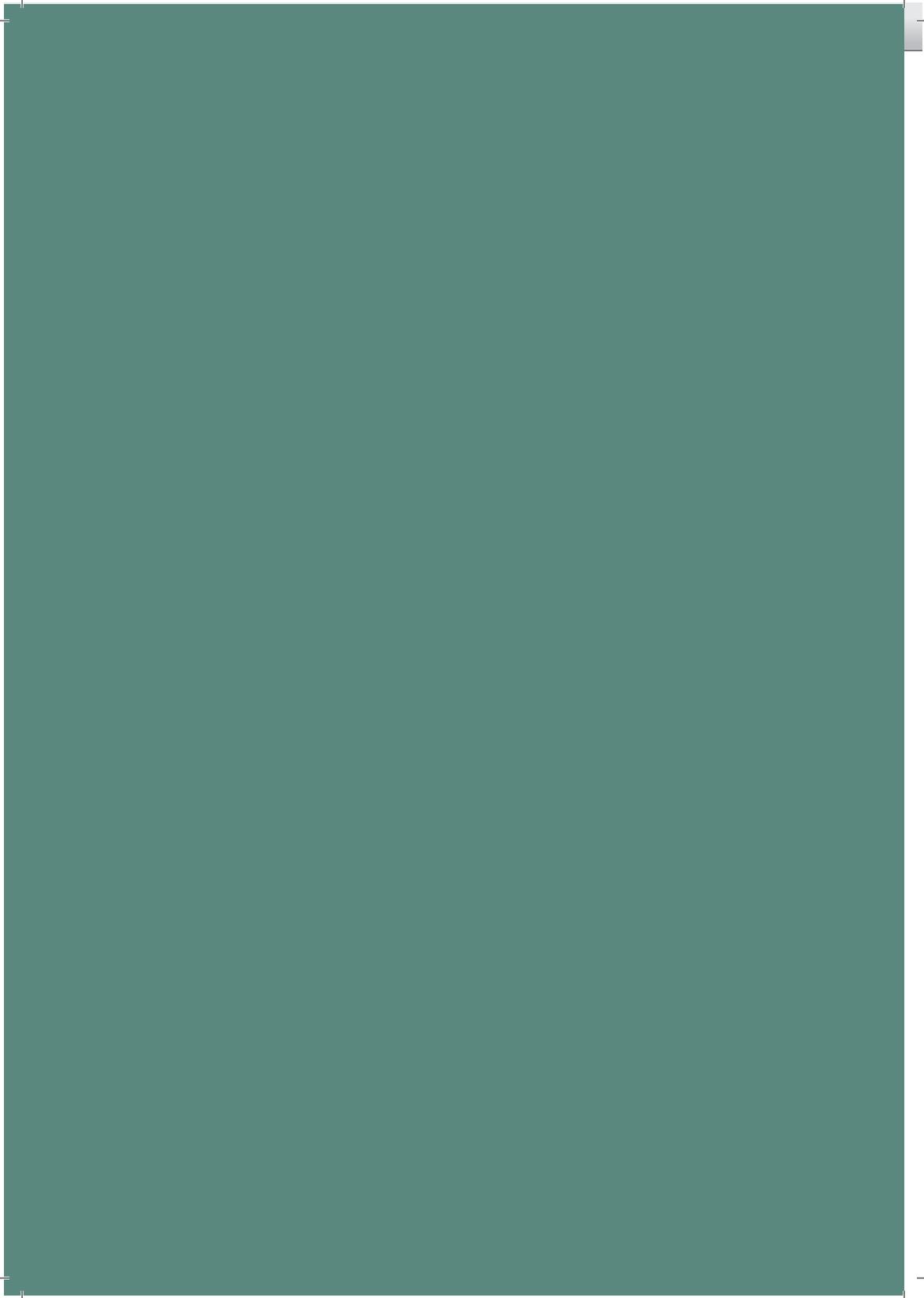




Smart New World





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Preface

For centuries, technical innovations have altered thinking, and by way of thinking, the fundamentals of our human existence. But thinking has been confronted with a challenge for about 30 years that until recently could hardly be conjectured and yet is conceivably crucial as regards the survival of humanity. The electronic technologies that since postmodernism and the triumphal procession of the digital have been viewed as an optimized form of the conventional systems used to write things down in accordance with Jean-François Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, or Friedrich Kittler, are now tangible as radical changers of communications and especially of social and political structures. But what is gladly overlooked is the fact that the World Wide Web and Hypertext are children of the late nineteen-eighties. The first graphic web browser, Mosaic 1.0, first saw the light of day in April 1993. A digital revolution had taken place and we are still experiencing it today.

The so-called social networks with contents, images, and emotions that are seemingly so very familiar to us are accessible to a potentially infinite readership, can never be deleted, and, furthermore, call the laws governing copyright into question. But especially the truly endless amount of data from the private world, the business community, and politics has also become accessible for the classic intelligence services or the NSA. In the process, an enormous potential of power and coercion has been placed in the hands of the intelligence services and the business world. Big Data—data capitalism.

Who is the contractee, who is a part of the shadow world, and what happens to the data there? The question is not solely whether governments as contractees, the intelligence services themselves, and their agents misuse the controlled knowledge as a key to power but also how we go about with the technology and how we behave towards it. Enlightenment is necessary—“Thinking must now also be followed by data.”

The *Smart New World* exhibition on the occasion of the 2014 Düsseldorf Quadriennale oscillates between the immaterial of the concealed, the

immaterials² and the material of the artists and wishes to provide stimulation, irritation, and an awareness about the present and the future “beyond tomorrow” via the format of the art exhibition. Under the joint heading *Future Perspectives*, the project of the Kunsthalle enters into a thematic dialogue with the parallel exhibition in the Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen: *Les Immatériaux*, for instance, which references the 1985 exhibition curated by Jean-François Lyotard at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.

Welcome, or in the sense of the International Necronautical Society: Moving in on your networks—moving on in your networks!

Gregor Jansen

Director Kunsthalle Düsseldorf

1 Translated from Hans-Ulrich Gumbrecht, “Das Denken muss nun auch den Daten folgen,” in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 12, 2014: <http://www.faz.net/-gso-7n7tg> [last accessed: March 19, 2014].

2 See Tilman Baumgärtl, “Immaterialien: Aus der Vor- und Frühgeschichte der Netzkunst,” June 26 1997: <http://www.heise.de/tp/artikel/6/6151/1.html> [last access: March 19, 2014].

Introduction

Elodie Evers, Magdalena Holzhey

The truth is: Industrial capitalism is transforming itself into digital capitalism. That changes things. The world is ruled by the binary code. The upheaval in the fields of information and communications technology revolutionized the business world and society. What does it mean to be an individual in the information society? An information society is always also a surveillance society. It is not the information that yields the surveillance, the surveillance yields the information: as soon as human utterances and emotions become quantifiable, they are recorded in order to optimize somewhere something economic, bureaucratic, or ideological. Since Edward Snowden uncovered the widespread surveillance carried out by the American National Security Agency at the latest, the post-privacy thinker is certain of one thing: The private sphere is dead, the NSA solely made it official. Powerful computers sometimes know more about us than we do. The storage capability of these systems increases every year, consistently, by orders of magnitude. It's getting to the point where you don't have to have done anything wrong, you just eventually have to fall under suspicion from somebody, even if it's by a wrong call, and then they can use the system to go back in time and scrutinize every decision you've ever made, every friend you've ever discussed something with, and attack you on that basis to sort of derive suspicion from an innocent life and paint anyone in the context of a wrong-doer. Three letters, most experts are agreed, will play a decisive role in the future of modern warfare: NCW for Network Centric Warfare. Behind this designation lie networks that link military units to each other and to their commanders—thus offering them the possibility of rapid, flexible, and asymmetrical warfare. The goal has been unambiguously formulated: the attainment of information superiority over the enemy. As a piece of business jargon, and even more so as an invocation of coming disruption, the term Big Data has quickly grown tiresome. But there is no denying the vast increase in the range and depth of information that's routinely captured about how we behave, and the new kinds of analysis that this enables. By one estimate, more than 98 percent of the world's information is now stored digitally, and the volume of that data

has quadrupled since 2007. Ordinary people at work and at home generate much of this data, by sending e-mails, browsing the Internet, using social media, working on crowdsourced projects, and more—and in doing so they have unwittingly helped launch a grand new societal project. We are in the midst of a great infrastructure project that in some ways rivals those of the past, from Roman aqueducts to the Enlightenment's Encyclopédie. The digital reflection of today's person is fragmented into hundreds of individual parts. Knowledge on the Internet is dynamic. It is fleeting. It is volatile. It changes its shape every day. We know little about its sources, the interests standing behind it and its reliability. The result is the growth of a cut-copy-and-paste culture without true appropriation of the contents. Information wants to be free. Information also wants to be expensive. Information wants to be free because it has become so cheap to distribute, copy, and recombine—too cheap to meter. It wants to be expensive because it can be immeasurably valuable to the recipient. That tension will not go away.

Source: *The Internet**

The *Smart New World* exhibition focuses on digitalization—the dissolution and transformation of analog information into digital codes for the purpose of storing and processing them—and the radically fundamental changes it has brought about on society. The invited artists not only find inspiration for their pictorial worlds in the rapid developments taking place in the field of digital technology, but they also reflect upon their cultural, social, and political dimensions.

Their diverse pieces likewise deal perceptively, critically, and humorously with the possibilities, visions, and also the dangers of digitalization. In the process, they examine the effects of economic and state censorship, which constitute an attack on the democratic production of knowledge and the private sphere of each and every individual, as well as the impact of the

Internet on our structures of thinking and knowing. All of the works in the exhibition have an investigative potential in common.

The International Necronautical Society (INS), a neo-avant-garde, stringently hierarchically organized network of artists, writers, and philosophers, has developed a complex admission procedure for the exhibition. Every visitor must sign a consumer contract on the basis of the INS's philosophical doctrine. Signing this declaration, which is based on the conditions of present-day digital capitalism, is absolutely required in order to visit the exhibition.

Christoph Faulhaber's filmic artist biography tells—among other things—about his uncomfortable and provocative performances with which he demonstrates the mechanics of state-run surveillance apparatuses while it was the artist duo Korpys/Löffler themselves, who employed intelligence-gathering methods in conjunction with their observation and documentation of the German Intelligence Service's new Berlin headquarters. The films of Omer Fast and Santiago Sierra take very different but equally effective approaches in examining the digitally-controlled drone missions that have come to play a defining role in modern warfare. The largely unknown and invisible and yet huge and physically tangible components of the American military and intelligence services such as buildings and satellites are at the heart of Trevor Paglen's comprehensively researched works. Laura Poitras, who along with Glenn Greenwald was the first person to have had access to the global surveillance and espionage documents made available by Edward Snowden, combines film material documenting the construction of the NSA surveillance warehouse in Bluffdale, Utah over the course of several years. For his part, the writer Kenneth Goldsmith takes the utopian potential of the Internet seriously and is active on behalf of freedom of information and educational equality by declaring privatized information to be public property. At the same time he calls attention to the sheer inexhaustible flood of digital data that is virtually impossible to get under control. The artist Taryn

Simon in turn subjects the flood of Internet images to a conceptual intervention which clearly shows that search engines are never “neutral” and that they determine our imagination to a considerable extent. Aleksandra Domanović likewise reveals how the keyword-based acquisition of knowledge influences thought and perception, and in a performance accompanying the exhibition Xavier Cha translates the often compulsive use of digital media into a choreography. Tabor Robak presents advertising’s seductive strategies by means of the possibilities of digital imaging. Simon Denny, finally, turns hardware into sculpture in his contribution to the exhibition, broaching the theme of the significance of technical development, communications, and interface. His massive block of squashed television sets and analog television images on printed canvases create a link both visually and contentually to the expansive black box in the entrance area in which the INS archives the visitors’ signatures it has collected: this black box is part of a system that only makes communications and the transfer of information possible via the interface, without making the internal processes visible.

*

www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-14838490.html http://www.fes.de/aktuell/documents%202013/130215_Digitaler_Kapitalismus.pdf
<http://irights.info/eine-informationsgesellschaft-ist-immer-eine-uberwachungsgesellschaft>
<http://www.tagesanzeiger.ch/leben/gesellschaft/Die-PostPrivacyBewegung/story/18211611?track>
<http://www.washingtonsblog.com/2013/06/top-spying-experts-even-good-people-should-oppose-spying-because-if-someone-in-government-takes-a-dislike-to-you-the-surveillance-can-be-used-to-frame-you.html>
<http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/armeen-der-zukunft-technologien-und-taktik-fuer-den-krieg-von-morgen-a-846443.html>
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/12/theyre-watching-you-at-work/354681/>
<http://www.spiegel.de/netzwelt/web/identitaet-im-netz-das-digitale-ich-liegt-in-scherben-a-567899.html>
http://www.julius-leber-forum.de/projekte/digitale-oeffentlichkeit/2012/06-wissen-der-welt.html?np_all=1
<http://www.zeit.de/studium/hochschule/2011-05/lehre-google>
http://www.librarianoffortune.com/librarian_of_fortune/2011/08/information-wants-to-be-free-or-expensive.html
 [last accessed: March 4, 2014].

International Necronautical Society

Admission Procedure, 2014

The *Admission Procedure* devised by the International Necronautical Society (INS) for *Smart New World* reconfigures several key tenets of INS doctrine (itself collaged together as a series of “found” fragments from previous avant-garde, corporate, and political-historical moments) into a consumer contract. Visitors to the *Smart New World* exhibition are admitted only when they have submitted a signed declaration affirming, in the face of both the digital-capitalist present moment and the accumulated history of Western culture, their own inauthenticity. The subject of a previous INS Declaration or Joint Statement, delivered first by the INS founder and General Secretary Tom McCarthy and INS Chief Philosopher Simon Critchley in The Drawing Center in New York (and subsequently at art institutions around the world by actors playing the roles of McCarthy and Critchley), inauthenticity is a core INS concept. INS dogma holds that we are not, and never have been, “authentic” or autonomous individuals but rather “dividuals”: always-already given over to systems of language, power, and the technologies through which these operate. Rather than engage in a futile—and reactionary—charade of reclaiming individual “freedoms” from the network, dividuals should accept and celebrate the fact that it is only through the acknowledgment of one’s radical inauthenticity that agency—cultural, political, or subjective—begins.

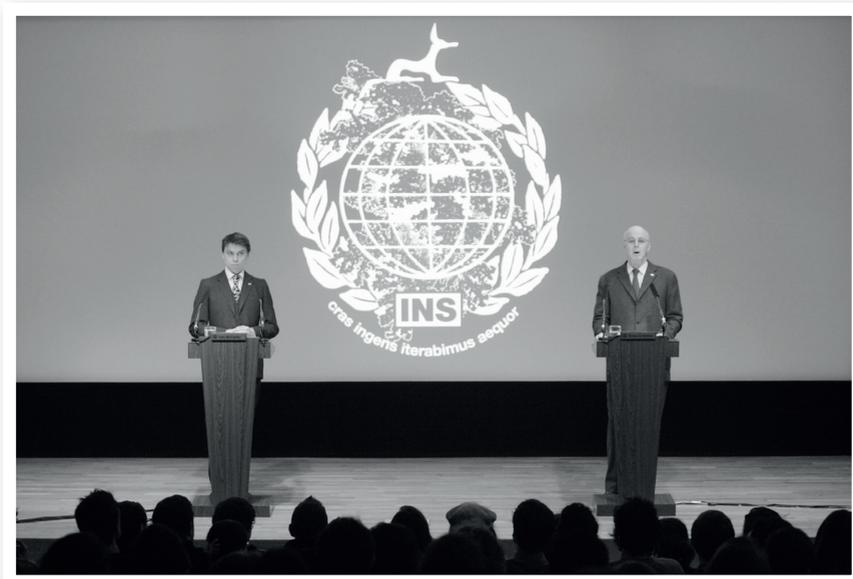
The giant filing cabinet around which—in a ritual suggestive of the *Tawāf* circumambulation—

visitors rotate as they complete their declarations, is conceived as a black box. This object, or symbol, has also played a central role in the history of the INS, who have placed, in venues such as the Moderna Museet Stockholm and the Hartware MedienKunst-Verein Dortmund, airplane flight-recorders (“black boxes”) transmitting looped lines of “found” poetry over FM radio to the surrounding city. Symbolically, the black box points both to Franz Kafka’s quasi-theological visions of bureaucracy and to the notion (outlined by the psychoanalysts Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok in relation to Freud’s case history of “The Wolf Man”) of the crypt: a double-term that carries the dual sense of funerary architecture and of digital encryption.

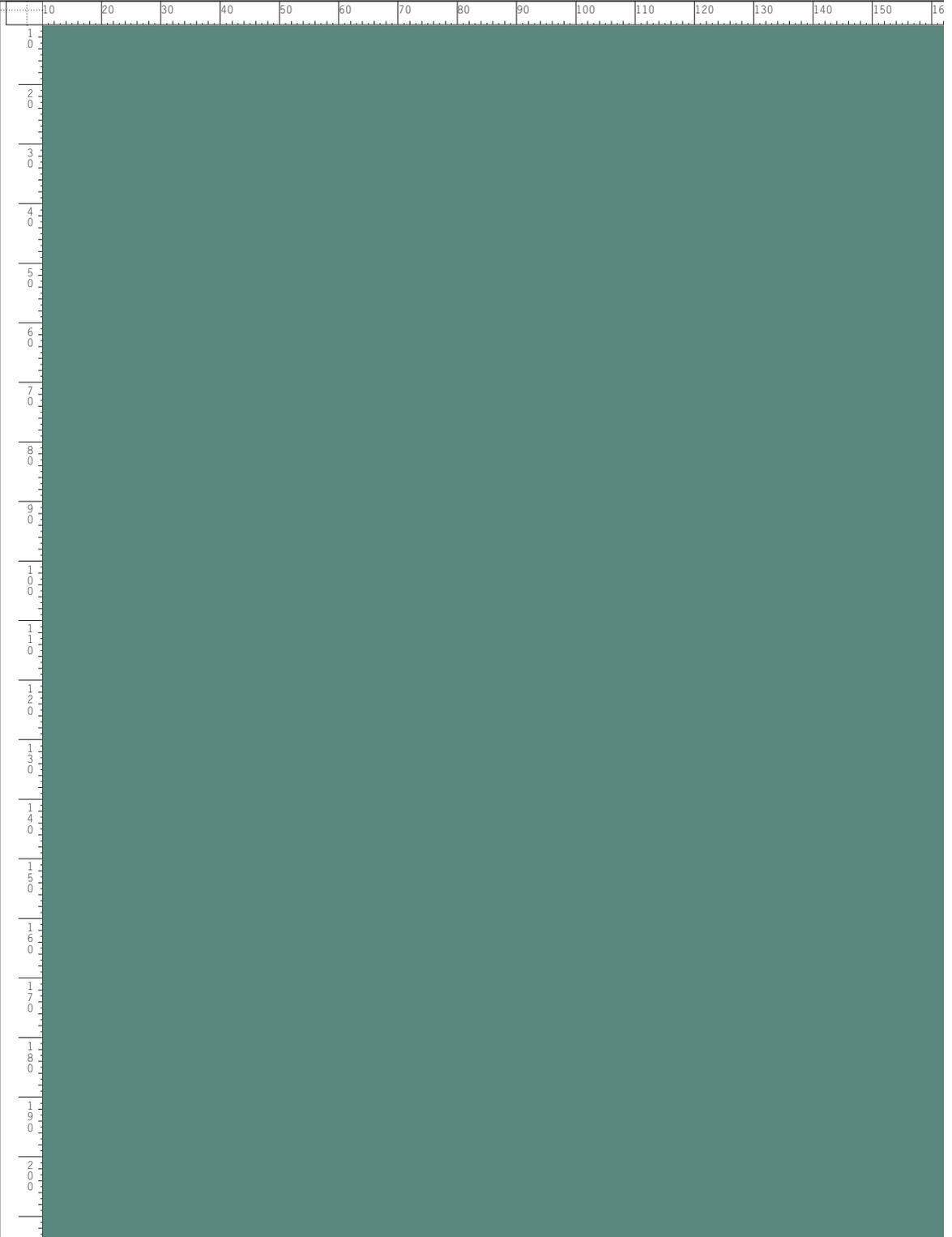
The INS was founded by novelist Tom McCarthy in 1999, and consists of a rigidly hierarchical assemblage of writers, artists, philosophers, and cultural activists.

International Necronautical Society, First Committee:

General Secretary: Tom McCarthy
 Chief of Propaganda (Archiving and Epistemological Critique) & Press Service: Anthony Auerbach
 Chief Obituary Reviewer: Melissa McCarthy
 Head Philosopher: Simon Critchley
 Environmental Engineer: Laura Hopkins
 Illustrator: Francis Upritchard
 First Flight Officer: Isabel Rocamora
 Chief Cartographer: Alexander Hamilton



INS-Declaration of Inauthenticity, Tate Britain, London 2009, Photo: INS Department of Propaganda, © 2014 Richard Eaton/Tate, courtesy of International Necronautical Society



160 170 180 190 200 210 220 230 240 250 260 270 280 290 300

Laura Poitras

Trevor Paglen 3

1 S T F L O O R R I G H T

Trevor Paglen 2

Simon Denny

Trevor Paglen 1

Santiago Sierra

Trevor Paglen

*1974, Maryland, lives in New York

1) *Autonomy Cube*, 2014, in cooperation with Jacob Appelbaum, acrylic, motherboard, Tor software

2) *National Security Agency, Ft. Meade, Maryland*, 2013 / *National Reconnaissance Office, Chantilly, Virginia*, 2013 / *National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, Springfield, Virginia*, 2013

All: C-print, 45,8 x 68,6 cm

3) *Code Names*, 2001 to present, continuous list of classified military and intelligence programs, dimensions variable

The work of the artist and geographer Trevor Paglen is devoted to the logic of secrecy displayed by military and surveillance organizations in the United States. Although their infrastructure and constitution is based on invisibility, national security agencies operate in the real world within such physical tangible objects as buildings, airplanes, and satellites, which cannot easily be made to vanish. Paglen employs the methods of investigative journalism in order to be able to focus his high-performance, hi-tech camera lenses on these sought-after objects, and furthermore collaborates with a network of experts. In previous series of works Paglen has located secret military installations, the orbits of surveillance and spy satellites, in addition to discovering the code names and mechanisms of concealed military and intelligence programs. The photographer's pictures are thus indexes in which the physical traces of a secret world materialize. His photographs are at the same time extremely stylized and even

sublimely beautiful, to some extent. They ask how much and what information at all can be conveyed by an image, whereby in doing so, he already casts doubt on the function of photography as a witness.

Paglen's most recent series encompasses night photographs of the headquarters of the NRO (National Reconnaissance Office), the NGA (National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency) and the NSA (National Security Agency). When Edward Snowden's revelations were being made public, Trevor Paglen once more realized that these agencies are virtually unrepresented as images in the general public. He subsequently rented a helicopter in November 2013 in order to visualize precisely these institutions, which are exhibited here, the archives, administrators and producers of "Big Data." The artist took a decisive step in doing so: the indexes were to become signs that one first had to learn how to read. The photographs are intended to flow as vocabulary into the



National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, Springfield, Virginia, 2013, courtesy of the artist; Galerie Thomas Zander, Cologne; Metro Pictures, New York; Altman Siegel, San Francisco



National Security Agency, Ft. Meade, Maryland, 2013, courtesy of the artist; Galerie Thomas Zander, Cologne; Metro Pictures, New York; Altman Siegel, San Francisco

discussion regarding the relationship between state and citizen. It is therefore only consequential that Paglen has published these photographs in a journalistic context, making them available on the Internet where they can be downloaded for free; in fact he even calls for their wide dissemination.¹

His piece *Autonomy Cube* also has an activist impetus to the extent that it advocates the appropriation of the logic of secrecy in order to protect the private sphere. The cube developed together with the programmer Jacob Appelbaum makes encrypted Internet surfing available to all visitors by routing all communication traffic over the anonymizing Tor network, thus disguising the user's identity and location. *Autonomy Cube* thus helps one attain more sovereignty by means of concealment—only one of the work's many paradoxes. While the hardware's transparent casing makes the usually-hidden technology behind the monitors that enables networks such as this

one visible, it cannot, in the end, explain the overriding mechanisms. Such contradictions are an essential feature of Paglen's works. This is also the case in the wall piece *Code Names*, which displays the code names for secret military and intelligence programs of the American armed forces in black and white on the wall. It is impossible to decipher them without specialized prior knowledge. It is rather the overabundance of information that in turn references this enormous sector of the military that eludes public access.

¹ Trevor Paglen published the photographs for the first time together with an accompanying article at the online news magazine *The Intercept*, which was founded by Glenn Greenwald, Laura Poitras, and Jeremy Scahill. See <https://firstlook.org/theintercept/article/2014/02/10/new-photos-of-nsa-and-others> [last accessed: March 11, 2014].

Simon Denny
***1982, Auckland, lives in Berlin**

Analogue Broadcasting Hardware Compression, 2013, inkjet on canvas, metal fittings, compressed television sets, images of Arqiva Chanel 4 television broadcasting transmitter (Sudbury, England), 320 x 900 x 250 cm with plinth, Alastair Cookson

Like a window to the world, the television set was the first audiovisual mass media device to bring information and entertainment into the living rooms of the citizenry. Television has now become increasingly advanced and has subsequently evolved into a “Smart Display”—a mobile and fully operational computer that can be deployed individually. The media artist Simon Denny marks this conversion in his sculpture *Analogue Broadcasting Hardware Compression*. For his piece Denny photographed the last remaining examples of analog equipment used by British television stations and printed original-sized pictures of the devices on canvas with an inkjet printer. Arranged in two parallel rows, a sort of tube comes about within which Denny placed squashed television sets. The artist accordingly employed the (data) compression process on the hardware, which in turn represents the reason for the equipment becoming useless in the first place; because these transmitters were obsolete from the moment the switch from analog to digital signals took place. “Compression” is derived from the Latin word *comprimere* (to press) and designates an operation in which information is deleted in order to reduce the size of data, making their transmission and storage easier. According to the media theoretician Lev Manovich, “lossy compression”¹ represents the basis of our computer culture and consequently digital television.

In previous works Simon Denny discussed the history of the mutual dependency of technology, information transmission, and aesthetics as regards television. He dealt in particular with the contrast between analog television sets with their wide frames and deep casing and the flat, almost frameless screens of the digital era.

Digital development constantly strives to become ever softer, to dissolve completely in its interface; the artist places that what we have lost on a pedestal and in doing so creates a seemingly hermetic monument to the massive and bulky processor of the analog age. It recalls the continuous disappearance of the box as the representative for all the electronic buttons concealed behind the metal and plastic casings. Denny underscores this development from the object to the image even further through the compressing of his own exhibition; in 2012 he still exhibited the original transmitters as objects in the *Remote Control* group exhibition at the ICA in London. *Analogue Broadcasting Hardware Compression* was exhibited for the first time at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013.

¹ Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001).



Analogue Broadcasting Hardware Compression,
2013, courtesy Alastair Cookson and Galerie
Buchholz, Berlin/Cologne

Laura Poitras
 *1962, Boston, lives in Berlin

Mission Data Repository, Utah, USA,
 2014, video, 0'10''

Laura Poitras is a journalist and documentary filmmaker whose works deal to a large extent with 9/11 and its aftermath and with facets and the impact of the War on Terror. The final part of her trilogy encompassing *My Country, My Country*; *The Oath*, and the still-unpublished *The Program* also deals with counter-terrorism and the role of the whistleblower in society in the face of monitoring by the intelligence services.

Poitras has been on the Watch List of the Department of Homeland Security since the completion of *My Country, My Country* in 2006, making her subject to Secondary Security Screening Selection. Because of this listing and the corresponding repressions, the journalist Glenn Greenwald already wrote in 2012 about her films and the resultant consequences for the filmmaker's life.

Along with Greenwald, Poitras was the first person to have had access to the global surveillance and espionage documents made available by Edward Snowden. She was contacted anonymously in January 2013 and after making her PGP Public Key (Pretty Good Privacy—a program for encryption and decryption) available she received instructions about how to protect herself against hackers. In the wake of this e-mail correspondence a

meeting was arranged in Hong Kong between Snowden, Greenwald, and Poitras during which the files were handed over. While Greenwald selected the British daily newspaper *The Guardian* for the publication, Poitras has been working on a cinematic treatment of the surveillance affair. She furthermore collaborates with Glenn Greenwald and Jeremy Scahill on the platform they founded in February 2014, *The Intercept*, to which the artist Trevor Paglen has also contributed. "A primary function of *The Intercept* is to insist upon and defend our press freedoms from those who wish to infringe them."¹

For *Smart New World* Poitras has produced a short film showing the construction of the NSA surveillance warehouse in Bluffdale, Utah. Its future technical equipment is classified, but it is known that the center will require a power supply of 65 mega watts, its construction costs \$1.7 billion, and that 200 technicians are supposed to be employed there. The entire structure measures one million square feet. The filmmaker documented the construction of the site between 2011 and 2013.

¹ Glenn Greenwald, Laura Poitras and Jeremy Scahill, "Welcome to The Intercept," <https://firstlook.org/theintercept/2014/02/10/welcome-intercept/> [last accessed: March 24, 2014].



Film stills from *Mission Data Repository*,
Utah, USA, 2014

Santiago Sierra

*1966, Madrid, lives in Madrid

VETERANS OF THE WARS OF AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ AND NORTHERN IRELAND FACING THE CORNER, 2013, video, 0'15''10'''

Accompanied by a buzzing sound, the viewer in Santiago Sierra's video *VETERANS OF THE WARS OF AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ AND NORTHERN IRELAND FACING THE CORNER* treads through an abandoned, dilapidated building. The image is black and white, a little wobbly but razor sharp. As the shadows delineated on the white tiles reveal, it concerns images of a drone. The drone scours the vacant rooms, staircases, and corridors of the former Ebrington Barracks. But an overview in the sense of orientation within the building is circumvented by the fragmentary montage of moving images, which were filmed in part upside down or from behind. A ramshackle atmosphere is conveyed instead that is heightened further by the still pictures that interrupt the film material. Like a *memento mori* they depict details that tell of decay, decomposition, and death. As soon as the viewers begin recognizing places, they also become aware of the drone's supposed target: the gradually detect soldiers. Facing the wall, they stand in a corner, thus avoiding the viewer's glance.

The concept artist Santiago Sierra has been carrying out a series of actions since 2011 in which veterans of various wars stand in the

corner of an exhibition space with their faces to the wall. They are instructed not to speak or to react in any way with the public. By way of documentation, Sierra takes a photograph of each participating soldier. The film screened here represents a further development of this work: the perpetrators condemned to helplessness are tracked down by means of a drone so that the eye of the camera and the viewer concur. Santiago Sierra furthermore selected the historically-charged spaces of the former Ebrington Barracks as his setting—a site associated with the 1972 Bloody Sunday—without showing the section recently renovated for the presentation of the prestigious Turner Prize.

Sierra is known for his socially critical projects and installations, which he often also documents in film or photographs. He created an international stir in 2003 when he had the entrance to the Spanish pavilion at the Venice Biennale walled up except for a small opening through which only visitors with Spanish passports were permitted to pass. In 2010 he was supposed to receive the Premio Nacional de Artes Plásticas de España along with 30,000 Euro cash prize, but he refused stating that he did not to be instrumentalized by the state.



Film stills from *VETERANS OF THE WARS OF AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ AND NORTHERN IRELAND FACING THE CORNER*, 2013, Courtesy Estudio Santiago Sierra, Madrid and KOW, Berlin



Christoph
Faulhaber

160 170 180 190 200 210 220 230 240 250 260 270 280 290 300

1 S T F L O O R L E F T

Korpys/Löffler

Omer
Fast



Omer Fast

*1972, Jerusalem, lives in Berlin

5000 Feet is the Best, 2011,
digital video, color, sound,
00'30''

Five thousand feet—drones turn into an all-seeing eye at this distance: you can recognize the shoes, clothing, and hair color of the person being observed, said a former US Army “Predator Drone Sensor Operator” in a conversation with the video artist Omer Fast. This job description betrays the fact that the soldier carrying it out is more of a cameraman than a pilot. From a great distance he navigates the drone, which is equipped with a camera, a sensor, and a missile and as such, under the guise of an avatar, intervenes into the reality of the theater of war.

In 2010, Fast succeeded in making contact with a former drone operator although the FBI rapidly had his classified ad on Craigslist deleted and allegedly even intimidated his producer on the telephone. At two meetings in a Las Vegas hotel the drone operator explained the technical aspects of his work and the daily routine of his military assignment. In the process he also mentioned incidents in which civilians were accidentally killed and discussed the resultant psychological problems. In the film, Omer Fast declined to make a one-to-one recreation of the interviews, choosing instead to translate the traumatic experience into cinematic

consciousness by letting the incomplete narrative revolve around itself. The narration takes the form of an endless loop that is not repeated identically, but is rather constantly varied, creating a confusing puzzle of image and sound, representation and the represented, in which fact and fiction can no longer be clearly differentiated from each other. Fast not only broaches the theme of the effects of coupling weapons and communication systems but also alludes to the reciprocal influence as regards technical developments in the military and the cinema that has been discussed by media theorists since the mid-nineteen-eighties as well as to the associated perceptual and pictorial logistics.¹

Fast is currently making his first feature-length movie, an adaptation of Tom McCarthy's bestselling novel *Remainder*. In his function as the INS-General Secretary McCarthy participates in this exhibition.

1 See Friedrich A. Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999); Paul Virilio, *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception* (London and New York: Verso, 1989).



Film stills from *5000 Feet is the Best*, 2011, courtesy of the artist and Arratia Beer, Berlin

Korpys/Löffler

Andree Korpys, *1966, Markus Löffler, *1963
in Bremen, live in Bremen and Berlin

Personen Institutionen Objekte Sachen,
2014, 3-channel HD video, 0'21''46''

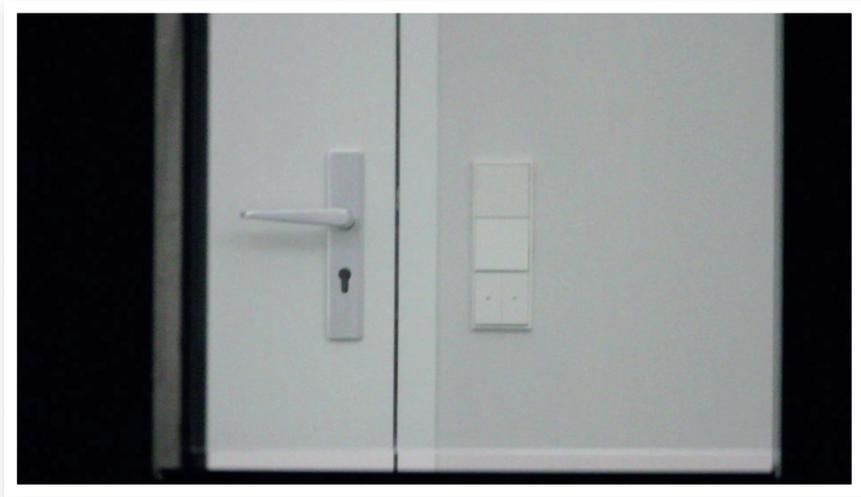
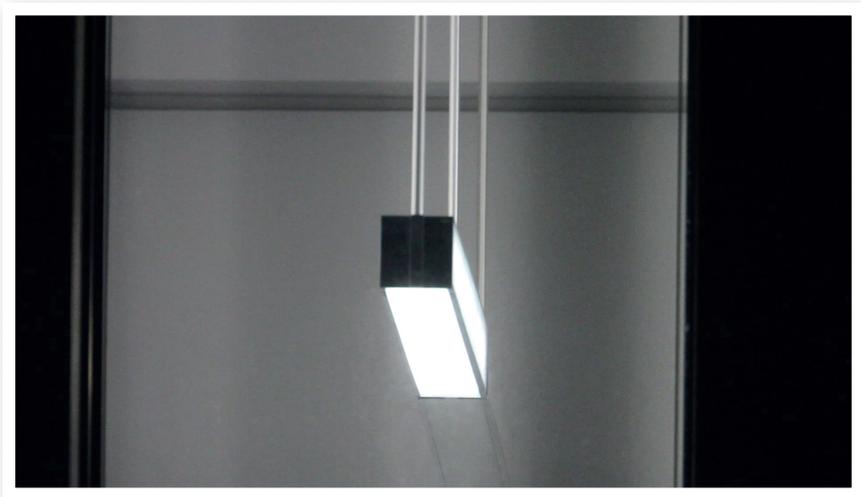
It is the largest and most expensive construction project ever undertaken by the Federal German government has: the new building in Berlin for the Bundesnachrichtendienst [Federal Intelligence Service], which is scheduled to move with its 4,000 employees from Pullach in Bavaria to the capital in 2016. The sum of the logistics involved in the move is so secretive that there have been reports about planning chaos at the construction site for years. Fascinated by the building's size and its prominent location in the center of Berlin, the artist duo Korpys/Löffler began documenting the development of the construction site some time ago. In the beginning, the artists focused their interest in the effects of the new structure and the apartment buildings, hotels and parks that are being erected in conjunction with the project on the infrastructure of the rather run-down section of town between Berlin's Mitte and Wedding districts. What self-conception does a society convey when its intelligence service is presented for the first time in an enormous edifice erected in the heart of the capital?

Edward Snowden's revelations, however, occasioned a very definite shift in the project's focus, which was now directed at data acquisition and the surveillance society. The giant building complex with its mat glossy aluminum façade and architectonic grid structure featuring circa 14,000 windows already represents the power exerted by knowledge and the control of information in an ambivalence of transparency and shielding. This new project, the premiere of which is taking place in conjunction with the *Smart New World* exhibition, features references to numerous other research-based pieces by the artist duo that consistently deal with the visualization and media-oriented transmission of power. Andree Korpys and Markus Löffler, whose collaboration dates back to 1989, have examined such politically-charged venues from recent history as the headquarters of the United Nations in New York and NATO in

Brussels, the Pentagon and World Trade Center or documented George W. Bush's 2002 visit to Berlin.

Prevented from entering the construction site itself due to security regulations, Korpys and Löffler employ the possibilities and sources available to them in order to acquire information about the location. They observed the building from the outside, encircled the grounds, recorded images and sounds with cameras and diverse microphones. Their investigatory principles are not all that different from those used by intelligence services or criminological methods in general. They involve gathering as much information as possible, the contents of which are initially not fully assessable or appear as unimportant marginalia precisely because this type of information is less open to manipulation and can therefore be more conclusive. The work's title already points to its criminological approach: *Persons Institutions Objects Things* (PIOS) is the name of one of the first computer-operated data banks that was initiated by Horst Herold, the head of the BKA [Federal Criminal Police Office] in the 1970s. The result is a 3-channel projection that records the image of the building and its surroundings in fragments. With its specific mixture of documentation and aesthetic idealization, the piece generates a particular atmosphere shaped by the architecture's static and coldness that traces the relationship between power and secrecy: "Government glorifies the Kingdom, and the Kingdom glorifies Government. But the center of the machine is empty, and the glory is nothing but the splendor that emanates from this emptiness, the inexhaustible *kabhod* [the cultic presence of God] that at once reveals and veils the central vacuity of the machine."¹

1 Giorgio Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory. For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government* [Homo Sacer II.2], (Stanford 2011), p. 211.



Film stills from *Personen Institutionen
Objekte Sachen* [Persons Institutions
Objects Things], 2014

Christoph Faulhaber
 *1972, Osnabrück, lives in Uedem,
 Hamburg, Berlin and Zurich

Every Picture is an Empty Picture,
 2014, HD video, 1'05''10''

Christoph Faulhaber's new film *Every Picture is an Empty Picture*, which is being shown for the first time in conjunction with *Smart New World*, is an equally keen-witted and humorous reflection on reality and identity in the global digitalized world. The film's material was processed in part with the editor of the Grand Theft Auto video game marketed internationally by Rockstar Games—a feature used to produce one's own video clips. The avatar Nico Bellic appears as the artist's intellectual alter ego and reflects on his projects. Faulhaber tells about his own biography employing a rapid mixture of documentation and fiction, classical narration and virtual reality, revealing how the artist continuously stretches the limits of prevalent systems, attracts public interest with his projects, disturbs and preferably changes things. Together with his colleague Lukasz Chrobok, Faulhaber founded for example the fictitious Mister Security company in 2005, which was contracted to oversee security in public spaces. His activities were observed and a stipendium in the United States was withdrawn after being interrogated in detail by the FBI. Faulhaber's work shows exemplarily the entanglement of the image and politics in our society. He himself has stated about his work: "The pictures of our present are time-based and context-dependent. However, the pictorial production and visualization process are increasingly being occupied by non-artistic production. . . .

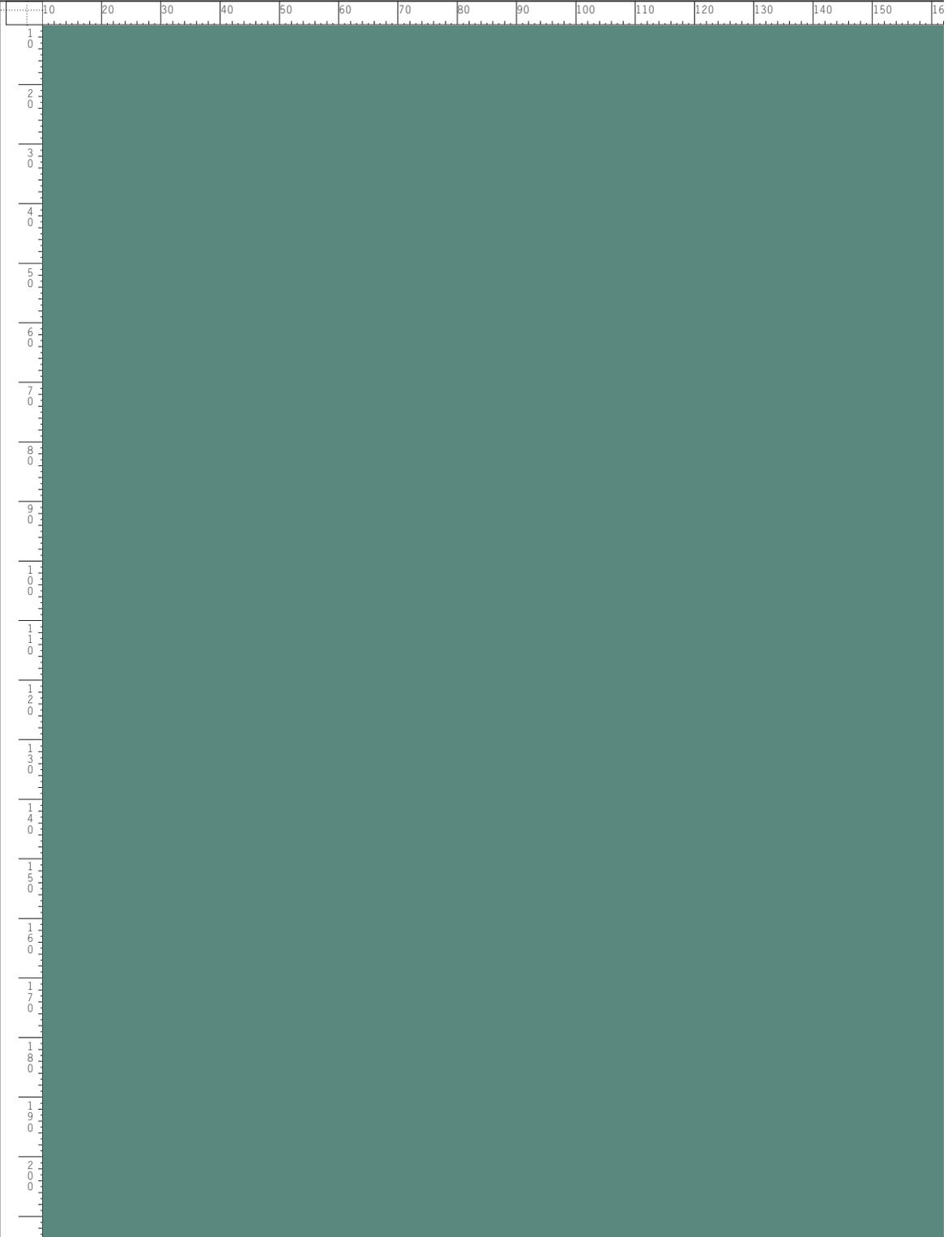
The Internet, cinema, television, the print media, virtual reality and reality shows contribute their part in furnishing us with a daily supply of consumable images. I reach into this mesh, meaning that I rearrange the images, creating a short circuit in the process. I believe that is what many artists are doing today to a certain extent, regardless whether with participatory strategies in the public space, through investigative or instructional interventions in networks and structures or through 'provocative' gestures."¹

An example of one such intervening practice is reflected—in an eye-catching as well as ironic manner—in the use of video games that give viewers the illusion of their own separate reality, a reality, that generates itself from the flood of images in the public space. Accompanied by music and effectively exaggerated, Faulhaber's film makes use of precisely those strategies that he critically reflects upon at the same time: he employed the seductive power of video clips and media images in order to stylize the artistic into a hero or pop star and to urge on the merger of the real and virtual world until it is impossible to tell them apart.

1 Translated from "Christoph Faulhaber: Das Leben als Projekt, Ein Gespräch mit Oliver Zybok" in *Kunstforum International* 205 (2010), p. 154.



Film stills from *Every Picture is an Empty Picture*, 2014





Tabor Robak 1

Taryn Simon

Kenneth
Goldsmith

Tabor Robak 2

Aleksandra
Domanović

2ND FLOOR RIGHT

Tabor Robak 3

Tabor Robak

*1986, Portland, lives in New York

- 1) *20XX*, 2013, single channel HD video, real-time 3D, 0'10''
- 2) *Xenix*, 2013, 7-channel HD video, real-time 3D, 0'05''
- 3) *Free-to-Play*, 2013, 4-channel HD video, custom software, 1' 00''

"Cyberspace. A consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators, in every nation . . . A graphic representation of data abstracted from banks of every computer in the human system. Unthinkable complexity. Lines of light ranged in the nonspace of the mind, clusters and constellations of data. Like city lights, receding into the distance. . ."¹

William Gibson's definition of cyberspace seems like a description when one has Tabor Robak's *20XX* in mind. But *20XX* does not represent the illustration of a virtual space. Robak evokes rather the future vision of a fictional megalopolis that is flooded by mobile screens, streaming data packages, and rotating projectors. Most of the signals and lights form countless brand names and logos from the gamer industry. Robak, however, avoids formulating an explicit consumption or monopolization critique here. The former graphic designer employs the seductive strategies of the advertizing trade, the mechanisms of which he puts on display by means of their exaggerated use. Thanks to the perfection of his craft and the use of corresponding effects, the artist creates moving images whose suggestive force is almost impossible for the viewer to evade despite knowledge about the mechanisms involved. Robak regularly sounds out this ambivalence from the beginning, for example in *Xenix*, a 7-channel video projection for which the artist modeled seven fantasy weapons, letting them wander through the worlds of diverse user displays that are striking because of their impeccable appearance.

"I tend to focus on the superficial aspects of the piece—the gloss and the sparkles and the

rainbows—as a way of giving the artwork a little bit of edge," Robak says.² An even more hypnotic impact is made by the piece *Free-to-Play*, whose appearance is modeled on the world's most popular online game, *Candy Crush*. Robak replaced the candy in *Candy Crush* with a catalogue of 7.000 icons, with the further difference that the computer "plays itself" here and the countless pictograms generate a colorful, permanently flowing painting.

But he also creates a certain sense of discontent because he employs the immersive effects of video games without giving the viewer the chance to participate in them in the sense of interactivity. To the extent that digital games are increasingly developing into real life animations, which enable the players to immerse themselves in virtual worlds—even having a hand at designing them oneself as an avatar—Robak's videos only demonstrate this participatory option. The discontent also results from the knowledge of a possible loss of control that can accompany the transformation in another state of consciousness. Robak's work produces a productive vibration that captivates the viewer on the one hand by means of the immersive experience and by inviting reflective distance through prescribed passivity on the other.

1 William Gibson, *Neuromancer*, (New York 1984), p. 51.

2 Tim Gentles, "'Commercial and Then Some.' An Interview with Tabor Robak," in *Art in America*, (December 16, 2013), <http://www.artinamerica-magazine.com/news-features/interviews/commercial-and-then-some-an-interview-with-tabor-robak/> [last accessed: March 19, 2014].



Film still from 20XX, 2013, courtesy Team Gallery, New York

Film still from Xenix, 2013, courtesy Team Gallery, New York

Aleksandra Domanović
 *1981, Novi Sad, lives in Berlin

Anhedonia, 2007, video, 1'26"51"

The Berlin-based artist Aleksandra Domanović wittily comments in her video *Anhedonia* about the manner in which keyword-based acquisition of knowledge on the Internet influences our thought and perception structures and can bring forth a cut-copy-and-paste culture in which contents are interchangeable. She combines the soundtrack from Woody Allen's 1977 movie *Annie Hall* with a sequence of pictures generated from the Getty Images stock photo agency—with over 70 million photographs and videos archived according to keywords an example of the contemporary flood of images and information.

Ceci Moss: You used Getty Images to illustrate an excerpt from Woody Allen's *Annie Hall* in *Anhedonia*. Why did you decide to recycle Getty Images, instead of images sourced from elsewhere, in this work?

Aleksandra Domanović: The first idea was to use YouTube material and build a feature film entirely out of our collective video treasury. It didn't work as well as I thought, since the tagging of material is left to the subjective choice of each user and therefore it was difficult to find appropriate footage. Stock image foundries function differently. Editors are hired to tag material based on a certain set of rules. Their clips carry reduced and concentrated meanings, are easy to find but also

reflect the absurdity of today's template-driven image economy. So the use of stock-image-industry language was strategic in a way that it allowed me to translate a movie script into a incoherent visual stream that could still illustrate the words very clearly, although not always in a straightforward manner. I named the video *Anhedonia* after I discovered that it was supposed to be the original title of *Annie Hall*, but was considered unmarketable. *Anhedonia* is a clinical symptom of depression. It's basically reversed hedonism, inability to experience pleasure from normally pleasurable life events.

It was also important for me to remake the whole film from the beginning to end. Then it can function as a full feature and could ideally be played again in a theater. The idea of replacing the visual layer of a movie, can also be seen as a reversal of Woody Allen's directorial debut, *What's Up Tiger Lily?*, a 1966 comedy, which utilized clips from *Kokusai Himitsu Keisatsu: Kagi No Kagi*, a 1965 Japanese spy film. Instead of translating the film, Allen added completely new dialogue that had nothing to do with the plot of the original film.

(Excerpt from an e-mail interview, July 31, 2008, <http://www.rhizome.org/editorial/437> [last accessed: March 20, 2014]).



Film still from *Anhedonia*, 2007,
courtesy of the artist and Tanya
Leighton Gallery, Berlin

Taryn Simon
 *1975, New York, lives in New York

Image Atlas, 2012, website, video
 installation

Taryn Simon exposes the concealed and the unfathomable, and in doing so alters our perspective of our environment. Characteristic of her work is the fact that the elements she employs to perfectly stage her research-based series—photography, text, and graphic design—stand on an equal footing with each other. The artist catalogues an abstract idea by means of strict, previously defined concepts until it is in a position to reveal the mysterious recesses of our society in accordance with an inner logic.

In *Image Atlas* Simon does without the use of her own images and texts for the first time and creates a website that enables the simultaneous search for pictures in—at present—57 countries. Every exhibition visitor can enter a word in the *Image Atlas* that is then translated into the respective language of the listed countries. This word is keyed in at most popular search engines of the individual nations (several of which are supported by the respective states). The top hits calculated by the respective search engine for each picture search are then listed in the *Image Atlas*. In the online version they are linked to the original website so that the visitor can navigate there.

To the extent that the *Image Atlas* demonstrates the dependency of search engines on their cultural, political and social context, it calls the ostensible neutrality of algorithm-based search engines into question. Simon recalls an experiment she carried out: "I typed in the word 'jew.' The results yielded a crude caricature that seems to have

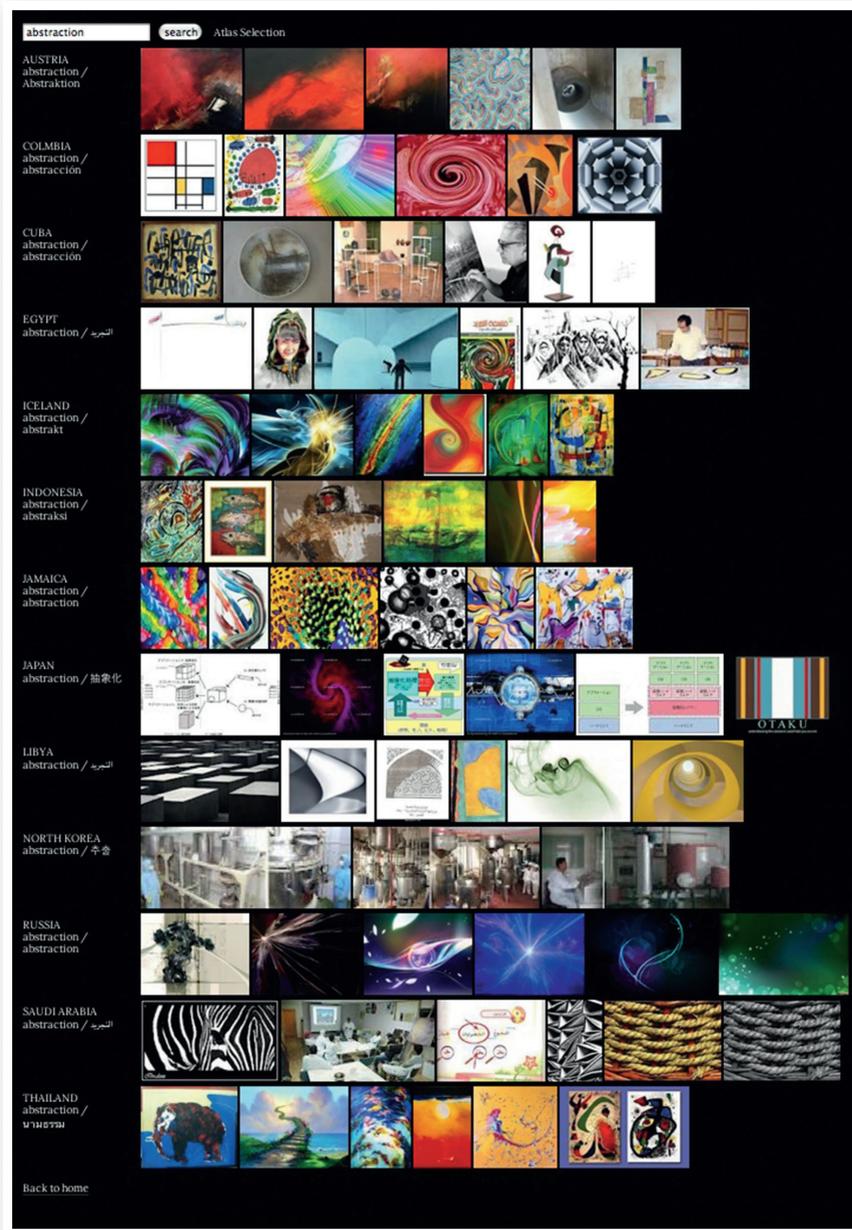
circulated in many countries. In Syria, it presented Obama in a yarmulke, and then in Germany it was all photos of Jude Law, because Jew in translation is 'jude,' and clearly 'jude law' is getting more hits than 'jew' within those borders right now. As people move farther away from verbal communication (Instagram, etc.), it's worth questioning if visual communication is subject to the same issues of translation and misinterpretation found in verbal communication."¹

According to Simon, the *Image Atlas* "investigates the engines that deliver us supposedly neutral statistical data. We are presented with the 'top' results when we search for words or images online in a way that is definitive. But really, 'top' images represent mass taste at a given moment that is inevitably shaped by political and cultural events, trends, etc. We have begun to naturalize the way a search engine works: we trust it to deliver us the best information. The *Image Atlas* reveals how subjective and contingent the process of search really is."²

This piece was conceived and developed in collaboration with the programmer and Internet activist Aaron Swartz.

1 Lauren Cornell, "Taryn Simon's Visual Babel" (August 2, 2012), <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/culture/2012/08/on-image-atlas-an-interview-with-taryn-simon.html?printable=true¤tPage=all#ixzz2bK5dc4wL> [last accessed: March 13, 2014].

2 Ibid.



"Abstraction" 8/20/2012, 5:10 PM
(Eastern Standard Time), Image Atlas,
2012

Kenneth Goldsmith
 *1961, Freeport, lives in New York

Papers from Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, 2014, installation, 5 tables, 5 printers, 10 lamps, 233,000 sheets of paper

No one, it seems, with the exception of the US Department of Justice, knows exactly how many files Aaron Swartz downloaded from JSTOR, nor does anyone know what files he chose to download or why he downloaded those specific documents. Various court documents show that he downloaded approximately 70 gigabytes of data, 98 percent of which was from JSTOR,¹ which translates to approximately 4.8 million articles.² Yet we don't know what constitutes an "article"—articles can range from a paragraph to dozens of pages. The size itself is an abstraction: certainly we can't conceive of what 4.8 million "articles" might look like, never mind what we would do with them were we to actually have them in our possession. It seems that all we know for sure is that Swartz downloaded *a lot*.

The day after Swartz was criminally charged by the US Attorney General's office a free culture gesture appeared on The Pirate Bay by a user named Greg Maxwell, which was a torrent of "18,592 scientific publications

totaling 33 GiB, all from Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society,"³ which were procured legally from JSTOR. Maxwell released a lengthy statement echoing Swartz's sentiments, decrying the paid cloistering of knowledge that should, by all rights, be made available to all. In this parallel gesture, Maxwell enacted that which Swartz was unable to: symbolically completing Swartz's aborted liberation of knowledge. To this day, Maxwell's torrent is still active, available for all who might want to possess it. From Maxwell's example, it can be deduced that had Swartz uploaded his torrent, his content most likely still would've been around. Maxwell's gesture is at once a ghost of, and at the same time the only concrete realization of, Swartz's vision, both symbolic and pragmatic. In the digital age, the *factness* of a cultural artifact is its content. No one will ever read Maxwell's trove (same with Swartz's), but the fact of this material—and its ever-present availability—outweighs what practical applications we might render from it.



Printing out the Internet, 2013, Labor, Mexico City

Sidestepping the overly discussed psychological and biographical narratives surrounding Swartz's death, *Papers from Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* at the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf will provide us a materialized window into Swartz's pure gesture. For the show, Maxwell's 33 gigabytes of JSTOR papers—totaling more than 230,000 pages—will be printed out and displayed, stacked on tables, giving us, for the first time, a glimpse into the scope and immensity of Swartz's vision.

For the past twenty years, my own literary practice has been exploring the issues of quantity, with a particular emphasis on materializing the ephemeral. My early books were collections of words: every word I spoke for a week from the moment I woke up on a Monday morning until the moment I went to bed the following Sunday night; every move my body made over the course of a day; a year's worth of weather reports as they were broadcast on the radio; the retyping of a day's newspaper into a 900-page book.

This project grew out of a previous project of mine, *Printing out the Internet*, which was the first-ever crowdsourced attempt to literally print out the entire Internet. Over 20,000 people from around the world contributed tens of thousands of pieces of printed Internet, which was displayed in a six-meter-high pile in a gallery in Mexico City during the summer of 2013. The project—which sparked a global debate about materiality, immensity, and the environment—generated headlines the world over, amounting to over 1,000 pages of press and commentary.⁴

Kenneth Goldsmith

1 <http://mitcrimeclub.org/SwartzFilings-state.pdf> [last accessed: March 14, 2014].

2 <http://pirateproxy.ca/torrent/6554331> [last accessed: March 14, 2014].

3 <http://pirateproxy.ca/torrent/6554331> [last accessed: March 14, 2014].

4 [Images and documentation can be found at printingtheinternet.tumblr.com](#) [last accessed: March 14, 2014].

Accompanying Program

Thursday, April 29, 18 pm

Guided tour for partially and fully sighted, free entrance. For registration please contact bildung@kunsthalle-duesseldorf.de or 0211 8996 256

Guided tour with the curators:

Thursday, June 26, 18 pm, with Elodie Evers

Saturday, July 19, 15 pm, with Magdalena Holzhey

Public guided tour:

Every Sunday, 13.30 pm

Saturday, July 19, 19 - 24 pm

Cryptoparty

Chaosdorf Düsseldorf as guests in the Kunsthalle

CryptoParty is a decentralized, honorary global event existing since 2012 to introduce the most basic cryptography software to the general public, such as the Tor anonymity network, public key encryption (PGP/GPG), and OTR (Off The Record messaging). Interested persons are invited to meet with their laptops, tablets, and comparable communication cubes and receive practical instruction about working with the necessary programs. Two to three hours is all that people who love learning about new technologies require.

Xavier Cha, *Surveil*

The New York performance artist Xavier Cha (* in Los Angeles) has developed a new piece

in conjunction with the *Smart New World* exhibition. She herself says about it: "The new performance is a movement piece using the surveillance of online traffic patterns of consenting individuals as the algorithmic map for the choreography of dancers in real time and space. The monitoring of this often neurotic, compulsively repetitive behavior online (checking email, facebook, email, twitter, facebook, email, instagram... in a repetitive compulsive loop, almost tic like) will be transcribed into transcendent movement by 2 professional contemporary male dancers. Every movement online is monitored, purchased, sold, and used to silently inform and guide our future navigation as consumers of digital information and services. We exist in an illusory veneer of autonomy or agency as navigators or "users" while being coerced along pre-determined paths, and deeper and deeper we plummet into these grooves of mass programming. In this performance I want the odd, virtuosic movements to trigger a strong uncanny, empathetic response—like that of watching a majestic animal pace in circles when kept in captivity, sharing and projecting this state of psychosis, this loss of control which persuades involuntary mental and physical patterns."

Please find further information about our accompanying program and our workshops for children and adults here:

www.kunsthalle-duesseldorf.de

This booklet is published on the occasion of the exhibition

Smart New World

Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, 5 April – 10 August, 2014

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Elodie Evers, Magdalena Holzhey

Curatorial assistant

Irina Raskin

Intern

Hanna Stinzendörfer

Collaborators of Kenneth Goldsmith's project: **Düsseldorf Art Academy: Doreen Kiesling** (coordination), **Claudia Barth, Tobias Hohn, Piet Heijden Hume, Jody Korbach, Kevin Schnabelrauch, Marcel Strahn, Stanton Taylor**

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For all works by **Christoph Faulhaber, Korpys/ Löffler and Santiago Sierra**:

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